THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Michael P. Fogarty

THE

Commonweal

Children's Books

Prince of the Puppets

Piero Bargellini

The Search for Enchantment

Claire Huchet Bishop

PILGRIMAGE TO CHALMA

Donald Demarest

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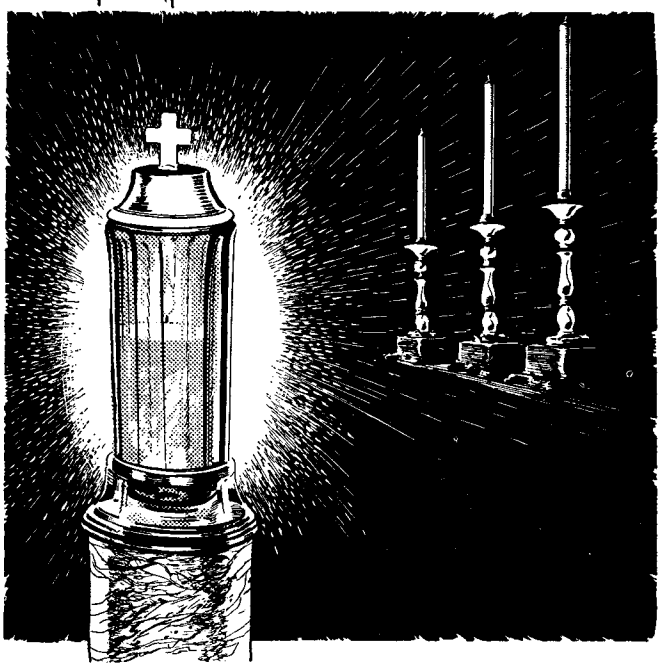

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THE Commonweal

week by week

OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

FOR the Republicans, the trek back from exile has been a long and dreary one. After twenty years in the political wastelands, it is understandable that they should still be savoring their great victory. But even in the first flush of triumph, the victors must already be conscious of the great problems they face.

General Eisenhower did not want to be President. Witness the strong statement he made a few years ago, in which he expressed his conviction that top military men should not run for office. But Eisenhower was the architect of victory in Europe and the figure most identified with efforts for a unified European defense. Rightly or wrongly, he shared the widespread feeling that the election of Senator Taft as President would endanger the things to which he had dedicated so much of his life and work.

With this in mind, General Eisenhower consented to seek the Republican nomination, in order to keep Senator Taft from getting it. Ike succeeded in winning, but only after a bitter intra-party fight at Chicago. In the excitement of the campaign, the public may have forgotten these facts. The Taft forces are not so likely to overlook them.

One of President Eisenhower's major problems will be to get what he wants from his Republican Congress. At stake will be the structure of international cooperation and collective security with which his name is associated. For the sake of GOP unity, during the campaign General Eisenhower felt he had to endorse all Republican candidates, even those who had always fought his favorite causes tooth and nail. Now Ike has to do business with them, and after the honeymoon is over, he may not find it easy.

On the debit side, there is the fact that both House and Senate will be dominated by Taft men. Senator Taft himself will probably keep his potent position as chairman of the Senate Policy Committee. By virtue of seniority, Taft followers in both House and Senate will get the chairmanships of almost all key committees, with the happy exception of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In the Senate President Eisenhower will find as chairmen of important committees men like the following: Senator Jenner of Indiana on the powerful Rules Committee; Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin on Government Operations; Senator Millikin of Colorado on Finance; Senator Taft of Ohio on Labor.

In the House the Speaker will probably be Representative Martin, and most of the vital chairmanships will be held by men of similar outlook, including Representative Taber of New York on Appropriations. All in all, most of the men in the line-up are not famous for the enthusiasm with which they back the kind of foreign program Eisenhower is sure to want.

TO assist him in securing cooperation, President Eisenhower has certain very definite advantages. Chief among them is his own popularity, which the election returns show to be much greater than that of the party. If worst comes to worst, President Eisenhower can therefore threaten to take his case to the people. Few Congressmen care to tangle openly with a vote-getter of Ike's proven stature, and such a threat may be enough to keep the reluctant in line.

In addition, it may turn out that opposition psychosis was all that ailed the Taft group during the lean years for the GOP. After twenty years of Democratic rule, the Republican legislators may simply have fallen into the habit of being automatically and constitutionally *against,* of fighting Democratic proposals without feeling any necessity to put forward constructive solutions of their own.

With this hypothesis in mind, there is some room for hope that the recent victory will act as a beneficial shock treatment for the Republicans. Now that the White House is in the hands of the GOP, proposals for legislation may in future receive more responsible treatment from this group than they have in the past.

But the differences inside the Republican party are real ones, and it may take more than a great

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victory to eliminate them. On such subjects as defense expenditures, aid for our allies, foreign trade and kindred points, these differences may still prove too much for party unity. If this happens, the burden of responsibility will necessarily fall heavily upon the Democrats.

In such a situation, the Democrats will undoubtedly see many opportunities to open old wounds in the Republican party, in the hope of aggravating the situation and splitting the Republicans still further. The temptation to play politics will be great. But it is one that should be resisted manfully.

The American people will judge the program and performance of the Republicans in the light of their campaign promises. But the Democrats will also be on trial. If the Republicans do split on foreign policy, the Democrats will have to join the internationalist Republicans in protecting and strengthening our basic structure of collective security. Both the national welfare and their own hopes of being recalled to leadership will be at stake.

INDO-CHINA DILEMMA

As if the Korean impasse were not enough, perplexities multiply in Indo-China, where two hundred thousand French and colonial troops plus half as many native Vietnamese are fighting anything but a winning battle. For the most part the Vietminh Communists engage in guerrilla operations, suddenly swooping down on scattered French outposts. In a terrain of swamps and jungles they have obvious advantages over European troops.

The French are holding the line against Communism in Southeast Asia at the cost of much blood and treasure. Their casualties are comparable to our own in Korea; the cost of that war exceeds our own disbursements to France herself. Because of her severe war losses in Asia, the French are unable to build up their army at home; the annual loss of officers, for instance, exceeds the number graduating each year from the French West Point. The drain of Indo-China on national finances is also a serious bar to the fulfilment of her European defense commitments. Indo-China has long since ceased being the profitable colony it was for many years.

Accordingly, as the dates for fulfilling North Atlantic Treaty commitments draw near, there is increasing likelihood of French demands for intervention in Indo-China. To man the defenses of both Southeast Asia and Western Europe is obviously impossible for the French Republic of today.

What will be the American reaction to such a demand? Our supplies are already going to Saigon in great volume. Even if it were feasible on other counts, the sending of our troops to Indo-China is politically impossible (for the big demand now is to bring our boys home from Korea). Moreover the appearance of American or other non-French troops in Indo-China would provide a pretext for the long-feared invasion by hordes of Chinese Communist troops.

As in Korea, adequate training and equipment of native Vietnamese—while it undoubtedly suggests the ultimate solution—would require months and months. Because of the colonialism involved in the whole issue, the French can expect little help from the United Nations. What remains is recourse to the alliance of NATO powers—either intervention on their part (with the risk of Chinese invasion), or relieving France of her European obligations to the point that she may concentrate on Vietnam.

Each of these solutions has the gravest drawbacks. With Asiatic feeling in its present state the days of the French in Indo-China are clearly numbered. Vietnamese patriots have maintained all along that given sufficient armament and freedom of action, they can defend themselves. They still believe it. Perhaps in the last analysis a specific and realistic timetable for gradual French withdrawal coupled with speeded-up training and equipment of native officers and units (plus guarantees of sustained international aid for the native defenders) would offer the greatest hope. The stakes are incalculable. For Indo-China continues to be the last bastion between the Communists and strategic Southeast Asia.

NEXT WEEK

BARBARA WARD writes about the growing standardization and other developments she has observed in vast reaches of the postwar world.

"If you go and see a new workers' suburb, whether it is in Cairo, or on the outskirts of Bombay, or out in Australia, or again in America, the type of architecture, the type of housing, the big blocks of flats all tend to be the same; and in whichever country you are there is a remarkable resemblance between steel plants. And again and again one has the sense that the twentieth century contribution to this world is constantly the same, is constantly reinforcing a kind of mass background, a mass environment, and that if you want variety you must look back to the things that have been created in the past."

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PHILIP MURRAY

TRIBUTES from men of every political and social persuasion are in agreement as to the late Philip Murray's great personal integrity. He was recognized by all as sincerity itself. He was a prayerful man of an admirable personal life. He looked upon the labor movement, the United Steelworkers and the CIO as means of serving his fellow workers rather than as vehicles for his own personal success. Few American labor leaders have a personal reputation such as his. At the same time Mr. Murray viewed himself as a true patriot. He believed that the greatest contribution he could make to the well-being of his country was to build up the labor movement, to educate the union rank and file to their vocational and national responsibilities. He had great faith in their potentialities, in their innate good sense. If the demands of the workers he represented always came first in his mind, he did not ignore the effects of their attainment on the nation as a whole. He saw things decidedly as a partisan, from the workers' standpoint, but not exclusively so. It is symbolical that he died in the midst of his work. His death is a great national loss. May he rest in peace.

FRANCOIS MAURIAC

ONE of the basic dilemmas of the Christian artist, and a perennial problem for Catholic criticism, was indicated by Cardinal Newman when, in his discourse on "Duties of the Church toward Knowledge," he denied the possibility of there ever being a "Christian literature." His denial was based on what seemed to him a self-evident principle: you cannot have a sinless literature of sinful man. If you attempt it, he warned, you may create something nobler than any literature ever was, but it will not be literature at all. Because literature must always be, not the vision of man as he should be, regenerate, but the record of man as he so tragically is, fallen from grace.

Perhaps no great writer in our century has felt this dilemma more cruelly or suffered its implications more publicly than the recipient of this year's Nobel prize in literature, M. Francois Mauriac. The ultimate recognition and eminence which have now been granted him in this award testifies to his achievement in resolving it to the satisfaction of his own conscience and the approval of the world of letters.

On the one hand, Mauriac has, from his earliest years, been illumined by a faith which seemed to possess him wholly. . . . "I belong to that race of people who, born in Catholicism, realize in earliest manhood that they will never be able to escape from it, will never be able to leave it or re-enter it. They were within it, they are within it, for ever and ever. They are inundated with light; they know that it is true."

On the other hand, Mauriac has, again from his earliest years, possessed a sensual imagination distinguished for its vividness, and an insight into the psychology of the sinner remarkable for its sensitivity and sympathy. The faith, the sensual imagination, and the psychology of sin have existed side by side in his works. As a result, some of the pious have been scandalized, a few of the sophisticated have been amused, and others, notably Mauriac himself, have been troubled.

Among the amused was Andre Gide, who, in a vein of distinguished malice, once wrote to Mauriac concerning . . . "this reassuring compromise, which allows you to love God without losing sight of Mammon, causes you anguish of conscience and at the same time gives a great appeal to your face and great savor to your writings; and it ought to delight those who, while abhorring sin, would hate not to be able to give a lot of thought to it."

Mauriac's answer to Gide's taunt was *God and Mammon*, a prolonged examination of conscience likely to remain the most brilliant abstract resolution available of a problem concretely solved in Mauriac's own novels. It is the problem, indicated by Newman, of the Christian artist's functioning in a medium which, of its very nature, holds grave dangers of a certain connivance with evil.

For Mauriac has created a "Christian literature" in the only sense in which it can ever exist—a literature which treats of man as he indeed is, fallen, but which does not stop at the fact of the fall, but sees beyond to its infinite immensity and the possibility for its infinite redemption. The Christian artist, like any other artist, must look into the eyes of the sinner, but what should distinguish his gaze from the others is the compassion and ultimate understanding with which he records what he has seen there.

Mauriac has looked deep—deeper than some who have found his novels too knowledgeable of evil for their tastes care to look. But his vision of the sinner, however somber, has been redeemed by a more profound vision—the vision of the Cross. It is this Cross, standing firm in the center of a world frequently unable to see it, which imparts the final meaning to his work. In that work the most vexing problems of the Christian artist are involved, and so, in the honor which has now crowned it, all Christian artists are indirectly honored. This great Frenchman has spoken for them all.

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THE EGGHEADS

IN France a man will coolly describe himself as an intellectual, as if it were a full-time occupation. Two men may be sharing a table at an outdoor cafe—one will answer, if you ask him, that he is, say, a carpenter; the other, with no more pride or arrogance (or shame), will call himself an intellectual. The word, in French, establishes a simple fact; it is not, as among us, an unflattering epithet, usually preceded by "so-called," which those burdened with it carry with shame.

Among us, it is hard to find a man who will frankly own up to being an "intellectual." The word has an alien, distasteful ring to it. To be called an intellectual is not a matter for pride and is almost never intended as a blandishment. We are suspicious of "intellectuals." It is well rooted in our tradition to believe that their subtlety and painful complexities do not measure up to the innate intelligence of the simple, black-and-white, "common-sense" approach to problems.

For generations the absent-minded professor was a standard American cartoon character, a touchingly absurd person in the world of harsh realities. Through this period the American intellectual was deemed harmless enough, a foolish innocent. But the absent-minded professor legend is now gone; his place has been taken by the vaguely sinister and wholly undependable "pseudo-intellectual," who takes a beating regularly in the popular press. Of course those who administer the beating usually express their admiration for "true intellectuals" (or people who share their own view) while berating the would-be variety. But still the emphasis is usually placed more strongly on the "intellectual" than on the saving "pseudo."

In its jubilant post-election story on the Republican victory, *Time* magazine says the election returns point up the fact that the American intelligentsia—the eggheads, to use the term which caught on during the campaign—has lost contact with the people. It is generally recognized that the bulk of the egghead group supported Governor Stevenson, and, as *Time* reported, even among those who didn't originally, there was a swing to Adlai during the latter days of the campaign.

For the first time in twenty years the eggheads were on the losing side of a political contest. *Time* (whose staff has long abounded in eggheads) sees this as a sure sign that the intellectuals have lost contact with political reality and the mood of the times. There are many, of course, who would say that the eggheads' hold on reality was always slight.

During the week when Joe McCarthy triumphed over an all-out egghead campaign against him, *Time* seemed to have excellent reasons for speaking as it did. It was *Time's* sister magazine *Life* which pointed out, in the middle of the campaign, that McCarthyism was at worst a "venial sin" compared with the "mortal sin" of Communism; and the egghead contribution to anti-Communism these days is surely less popular than McCarthy's.

On the eve of election Senator McCarthy told his radio audience that he didn't say that Schlesinger, Wechsler or DeVoto were Communists, but he did say that if they were Communists they would have written just what they wrote. Now in American "intellectual" circles each of these three men has been long known as vigorously anti-Communist, but that record became meaningless in the McCarthy context. It was enough to say that they belonged to the "intellectual" class—which would dramatically set their anti-Communism off from McCarthy's. That made them suspect.

Of Mr. Stevenson, on the same occasion, Senator McCarthy said that he differed from President Truman in so far as Mr. Truman, though a "cheap little politician" is a "loyal American." Mr. Stevenson, too, paid the price for his "intellectual" approach, sharing in the sinister coloring that has been spread over all "intellectuals."

An "intellectual," in this context, is a somewhat limited term. It doesn't embrace all men who live by ideas or are marked by their interest in the current of modern thought. By normal standards, Whittaker Chambers, for instance, is an intellectual—and if he had turned to the anti-Communist Left instead of the anti-Communist Right after his conversion from Communism, he would probably be tarred with the same brush that besmirched James Wechsler on election eve. In his youth Wechsler belonged to the Young Communist League but left in 1937 and has been a valiant anti-Communist ever since. Wechsler is still suspect; Mr. Chambers has, happily, suffered no similar fate.

I don't believe that all intellectuals are eggheads—that is, all are not deemed among the "intelligentsia" who supposedly have lost contact with the people. When used as a dirty word, "intellectual" refers to those who have been identified with "liberal" causes and who think that Communism can be effectively fired at from the Left as well as from the Right.

Calling them "pseudo-intellectuals," or even the kinder "egghead," plays cannily on the traditional suspicion of the professor-type as a guide to action. But despite the unfairness of many current charges, the eggheads are indeed not wholly blameless. It was not so long ago that they too were distinguishing between "venial" and "mortal" sins, where Hitler and Stalin were concerned. The American egghead situation is a complex story, and for the next few weeks I'd like to discuss it.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Our Pilgrimage to Chalma

CATHOLICISM HOLDS TOGETHER A MEXICO DIVIDED BY GEOGRAPHY, LANGUAGE, CONQUEST, REVOLUTION, POVERTY AND PERSECUTION

DONALD DEMAREST

A GROUP of us went to Chalma for the fiesta because we had heard that it was one of the most authentic Indian ceremonies in Mexico. Chalma is not far from Mexico City, but because of its inaccessibility it is almost entirely free of the ubiquitous tourists. I had been intrigued by the legends I had heard of Chalma and its miraculous figure of Christ, Nuestro Senor de Chalma. In Aztec times it had also been a pilgrimage center because of its idol to the Aztec god of carnal love. According to the legend, shortly after the conquest of Mexico two Augustinian missionaries working the region had attempted to destroy the idol but had been driven away by the local inhabitants. When they returned with reinforcements they found the idol in pieces and the wooden statue of Our Lord in its place.

Our family maid assured us that if we arrived at dawn we would see a vision of Christ hanging over the hills beyond Chalma and that since it was our first pilgrimage we must do a dance if we wanted our special intentions fulfilled.

Next morning the horses failed to arrive and we were informed by our go-between that their owner had changed his mind about letting us have them, presumably because of the riots supposedly taking place in Chalma. The taxi drivers we tried told us that they had been forbidden to make the trip that day. Finally, at ten-thirty we discovered a bus going to Chalma. Since the interior was jammed we climbed up on the roof with the luggage and a few other pilgrims. Our companions seemed to be in a festive mood, and we began to lose some of our apprehension about the road and what was waiting for us at Chalma itself.

All along the road over the mountains—which turned out to be every bit as bad as we had been warned it would be: at each turn the swaying bus hung over sheer drops of several thousand feet—we passed lines of returning pilgrims. Most of them were young couples, the wife riding the burro, while the husband led it and carried the child (a strange enough sight for Mexico). I couldn't help thinking about the Flight into Egypt.

When the crowded bus finally stopped about half a mile from the church, in a field full of buses from as far away as Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, it was almost surrounded by vendors of *refrescos* and fried meat. We found that the fiesta was still in full swing, although it was two-thirty in the afternoon. Also there were as many pilgrims streaming over the rocky hills toward the shrine as there were coming from it. The crowd, we noted as we jostled through the awninged passageway to the church, between the booths selling serapes and toys and religious objects, was remarkably serious and quiet. There were no signs of drunkenness and little gaiety. Although we were the only gringos (in fact the only people there in city clothes) we didn't encounter the hostility we had been warned to expect. No attention was paid to us, even when some members of the party took photographs.

In the large courtyard in front of the church there were about six groups of dancers surrounded by spectators. Most of these were dancing the combat between Moors and Christians. The Moors wore bearded masks and the Christians gilt crowns, and their brilliant robes ornamented with tinsel and rhinestones looked rich.

Inside the vast church, cleared of pews and statues except for the large figure of Our Lord of Chalma which dominated the church from its position high above the main altar, there was a crowd even at this comparatively late hour for the last day of the fiesta. In the front half of the church small family groups inched on their knees toward the altar, with lighted candles in their hands, and often with infants in the other arm. In the rear half were bands of dancers and singers with crudely lettered banners announcing the name of their village or barrio or factory.

One group of women in bright silks did a dance accompanied by the bells attached to the sticks they tapped rhythmically on the floor. Other groups of men, with colored handkerchiefs tied around their heads, crawled forward and backward on their knees in time to dissonant hymns. There was no harmony between the groups. Each seemed absorbed in its own ritual or devotion or penance. To one side there were two long lines, one of men, one of women, waiting their turn to disappear into a narrow aperture behind the altar.

Mr. Demarest has been associated with several New York publishing firms. He has been living in Mexico for the past year.

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What with the weird chants in a primitive monotone (in Nahuatl or some other language, certainly not Spanish or Latin), the smoke from the candles, the smell of incense, the sound of clapping hands and stamping feet and bells, the piles of dirt ground into the stone floor, and especially the strangely charged atmosphere, ecstatic, concentrated, private, we felt entirely alien (the Catholics among us perhaps even more so than the Protestants). Nothing in our religious experience had prepared us for the intensity, the impersonality of this devotion. Even the *Cristo* hanging above us, with its crude, tortured carving, its brown color, its long black hair, seemed more Aztec than Christian.

With some misgivings I joined the line of men waiting patiently to enter the tunnel beneath the statue. How much, I wondered, did this ceremony differ from the original pagan ritual? It wasn't hard to believe that when I got back there in the darkness behind the altar I would be seized and deftly sacrificed. Or maybe I too would be turned to stone.

At last I reached the opening. Bending almost double, I climbed some winding stairs in pitch blackness, jostled from behind. Finally I found myself in a large, well lighted space behind the glass case which held the statue. Here I was given a cushion studded with silver *ex-votos* to kiss and a crude oleo picture of Our Lord of Chalma. Somewhat thankfully I put some coins in the plate and crossed myself. My pilgrimage was over.

THE steps down led out into the sacristy. Here boys decorated with the ribbons of a Catholic youth organization were selling postcards, rosaries, beribboned badges and other representations of Our Lord of Chalma or of *Nino Jesus* lying on a cushion. Signs said that these had all been blessed. The prices seemed somewhat high. Three pesos for a glass-covered plaque three inches in diameter, eight pesos for one slightly larger. Even the plain buttons were a peso. And yet the counters were thronged with Indians bringing coins out of their purses. From a booth at the back of the room two bored-looking Augustinian priests were intoning prayers over the kneeling faithful and sprinkling them with Holy Water. One old woman put some coins on the counter and was given a small tin receptacle of Holy Water, which she drank.

In a chapel behind the main altar Indians were kneeling before a grille in front of which were lighted candles. When they had finished their prayers they threw coins into a sort of well behind the grill. The walls of this chapel were lined with *retablos,* all apparently fairly recent (the earliest date I could find was November 1949) and cruder in their art and the sentiments expressed than the older *retablos* I had come across in Mexico City churches. A good many gave thanks to Our Lord of Chalma for having been released from prison. A rack at the back of the chapel contained discarded crutches.

In the cloisters behind the church, decorated with Colonial paintings depicting events in the life of St. Augustine, Indians were cooking their dinner over charcoal fires, or washing their clothes in the fountain. The smell of burning sheep's head and smoke caught at my nostrils. As I made my way around looking at the pictures, Indians stopped and asked me to explain what the pictures meant and to settle the arguments about which saints they were. Quite often when one man would ask me a question, his companions would turn and say, "I thought you said *you* could read!"

I tried to imagine the scene transplanted to a Catholice Church in the United States (say St. Patrick's Cathedral); I attempted to conjure up a picture of the poor off the streets picnicking and washing their clothes and being as much at home in their cathedral as these Indians were. And I decided perhaps we are the pharisees. In spite of the superstition and the obvious remnants of paganism, the faith of the pilgrims to Chalma seemed to me closer to the faith of the early Fathers and of the catechumens. Then it seemed right to me that our Lady should have made her only appearance on this continent to these people.

ONE of the main reasons the Spanish missionaries were able to convert so many Indians in such a short time was that many of the practices of Catholicism were already foreshadowed in Aztec and other preconquest religions. Most Indian groups practiced some form of confession, penance, communion. When the idols and pagan temples were destroyed and Christian churches with images of the saints set up in the identical place, the Indians, who were polytheists, easily transferred their loyalties to the new gods who had proved their strength through conquest. In many cases an old god, such as Quetzalcoatl or Coatlicue (the Mother Goddess) or El Tepozteco was identified with Christ or the Virgin Mary, or his attributes were shifted to members of the Holy Trinity or to saints. The Catholic images were worshipped as deities, much as the old idols had been (and in some cases the original idol was concealed within the statue of a saint).

The Catholicism of the rural Mexican is distinguished by its parochialism and near-idolatory. Veneration is accorded chiefly to the local *santo,* the patron saint of the village or barrio—whose image is venerated so

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exclusively that if the statue is lost or destroyed the villages will often refuse to transfer their allegiance to a new statue. Next in importance come powerful or miraculous images such as Our Lord of Chalma or Ixtapec's San Salvador. The Indian is confused about the Trinity and tends to venerate the Cross (la Santa Cruz) as a separate deity. The rural Mexican's chief loyalty is to his parish church and his parish priest. In the same way his knowledge of the Catholic hierarchy is dim. He has some contact with his Bishop but very little knowledge of the Primate of Mexico and knows almost nothing about the Pope or the Vatican.

And yet the devotion of the Mexican population, especially of the Indians, is one of the most apparent and important factors in Mexican culture. When one first enters Mexico one is immediately struck by the ubiquity of shrines—especially to the Virgin of Guadalupe—in homes, on walls, in stores and even buses and taxis; the multiplicity of crosses one encounters along the roadsides when travelling; the crowds one encounters in church; the throngs crowding the altar rail for Communion every half hour; the lines in front of the confessionals; the prevalence of scapulars and other badges of the lay sodalities. One can hardly enter any church at any hour of the day without finding men praying with their arms outstretched as if hanging on a cross, or groups of women reciting the rosary or making the stations.

A Catholic observer cannot help finding more than mere superstition in these devotions (especially when he compares them with the lukewarm observance of some parishes in the United States); the student of history must detect an element beyond the fusion of Aztec superstition and propitiation and the piety of the Spanish conquistadores; the anthropologist notes an element of cultural stability. The Catholic religion is about the only unifying factor, probably the only unifying factor, that holds together a people separated from the earliest times by barriers of geography, language, culture, conquest, revolution, poverty and persecution. It is the factor that has preserved the Mexican Indian groups from the cultural distintegration that overcame the Indian populations of the rest of the continent.

CAN we look for a single cultural factor, or dynamic symbol, that has united these warring tribes, distinguished from pre-Hispanic times by psychological traits of intense individualism, parochialism, suspicion and hostility toward their neighbors? Is there an explanation for the survival of a faith grafted on these peoples by their Spanish conquerors—a faith that has survived one of the most intense persecutions ever visited by a state upon a religion, that has persisted through the closing of their churches and the destruction of their altars and images and the deprivation of their priests (and even, at times, the moral laxity and bad leadership of those priests themselves), that has withstood the blandishments of a schismatic church aimed at weaning them away from their loyalty to a distant and scarcely comprehended Rome, and the propaganda efforts of an educational system designed purposely to stamp out that faith?

One answer is undoubtedly the comparatively humane attitude of the Spanish colonizers, coupled with the more important valiant efforts of the Spanish friars to save their converts from exploitation. The educational and missionary and medical and sociological accomplishments of a Las Casas and a de Quiroga have undoubtedly survived centuries of muddle and neglect, destruction and persecution. But these would have been forgotten in time, or, if not totally forgotten, they would have survived merely as legend.

Almost all the writers who have dealt with the culture and problems of Mexico (of whatever religious or economic persuasion) are agreed that the one factor that has created and preserved Mexico as a nation has been the apparition and veneration of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Her story has been recounted so often that there is no need to go into it here, except to reiterate that she appeared to an Indian (Juan Diego) as an Indian (*La Morena*). She didn't appear to the Spanish conquerors and she didn't appear in the role of Our Lady of Remedies, the patron the homesick conquistadores revered. She united the Indians for the first time, became the only figure more important than the local *santo*. Her basilica claimed precedence over the shrines of Chalma or San Juan de Lagos.

More importantly, her function was not specialized, for certain diseases or activities, but approximated more and more the position assigned to her by Catholic dogma as the Mother of Christ. Her banner was carried by the Fathers of the Revolution, by Hidalgo and later against the anti-clerical Carranza by Emiliano Zapata. Even today the most virulent anti-Church politicians agree that Mexico would not be a nation, nor could it be governed as such, except with her symbol.

However, belatedly, the Mexican clergy is beginning to realize that *La Morena* can become a dangerous weapon in the hands of the politicians and of the state. A missionary effort must be made to strip her veneration of its false nationalism and to restore it to the Universal Church. Our Lady of Guadalupe is not only the patron of Mexico, she is the Mother of the Americas and also of the world.

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FROM ENGLAND

Unity and the Council of Europe

THE turn taken by European affairs in the last few weeks has left us British about as comfortable as a cat on hot bricks. The operation now being performed under the leadership of Spaak, Schuman, Adenauer, and de Gasperi amounts, we suspect, to the manslaughter of European political unity, or at least to crippling it for a generation to come. But our conscience tells us that our own negligence has made us an accessory before the fact; it is not for us to complain. At this stage it is probably less of a risk to leave the victim on the operating table than to take her out of the surgeon's hands and use those more natural methods of medicine which we ourselves would have preferred.

It remains to be seen, of course, whether a federal constitution for the six Schuman countries will in fact be ready by next March, the date at present fixed. But, assuming that it is, it may well amount to the division of Europe rather than to the consolidation of one section of it within a wider though looser whole. The Eden plan for keeping the Council of Europe as the organ of the wide and loose union *might* be made to work. But there will be a painful contrast between the strong executive authority of the Six and the Strasbourg "talking shop." Certainly there will still be common interest between the Six and the rest of Europe. But many of these—defense, monetary problems, questions of colonial development—are common to much of the rest of the world as well. The Atlantic Community provides a framework within which they can not only be discussed but lead to executive action. There is an obvious temptation to use this, rather than to struggle on to make something of the Council of Europe.

The British have always felt that European unity is somehow a little parochial; rather like a man, used to ranging over the world, who finds himself reduced by illness and old age to chatting with the neighbors. It is not surprising that the reaction of many British commentators to the doings at Strasbourg has been that Britain, Scandinavia, and the free countries of Southeastern Europe should waste no more time on what is variously described as the "rhetoric" or "ramblings" of the Council of Europe—at best "a useful scaffolding"—and should concentrate instead on strengthening their more effective Atlantic links.

The temptation could be more easily resisted were it not for the balance of power. This is partly a matter of economics. Britain and the Commonwealth are a powerful economic unit: but we see that if we negotiate by ourselves with the Schuman Six we shall have to dance mainly to others' tunes. However, it is even more a question of politics. We are frankly scared of Germany and of what it may make of Little Europe. We do not of course object to German recovery or strength as such. But we wonder how it will be used.

The glittering shop fronts, the luxury flats, and the still blitzed and blackened areas of working class housing behind them, are a symbol of fundamental confusions of which every visitor to Germany with even a little political sense is aware. We have heard a minister in the Adenauer cabinet talking of the recovery of the Sudetenland by "peaceful means" (where did we hear that last?), to say nothing of that vast majority of Germans who will not accept the Oder-Neisse line as final. We note that Essen workers seem more impressed with the paternalism of Herr Krupp than with the fact that he has enriched himself by slave labor. We see a new German generation growing up, of those who were still children at the end of the war, and who are beginning now to ask awkward questions about dictatorship, democracy, and other matters of that kind. Above all, we are conscious of a surge in Germany not merely of power but of power politics; a feeling that nineteen million tons of steel entitle one to a very big place in the sun. We are aware of the moral and material strain placed on France by having not only to solve her own problems, notably in Indo-China, but also to act as the main counterweight to Germany within the federation of the Six. We feel better able to cope with problems of this sort in an Atlantic Community which includes Canada and the United States, and disposes of all the most powerful economic and political forces of the free world, than within some loose framework of Europe alone.

YET we do not like the prospect of a situation in which Europe as a whole might cease to be an important unit in international affairs. There is no question, apart from an odd Bevanite voice like that of Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, of opposing the federation of the Six. Had British governments shown the same initiative in 1949-51 as today, it might well have been possible to secure a settlement in Europe on Eden Plan lines; with supra-national authorities for defence and the basic industries, but without any exclusive (in practice) federation. The chance was missed, and opposition today would inevitably appear as obstruction and do more harm than good. But we remain unhappy in

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Great Britain, and for reasons shared by many in the Schuman countries themselves.

A symptom of this was the line taken last month by the European Youth Council, assembled by the European Movement at Florence as part of its Youth Campaign; probably the most representative gathering of European youth ever held. A proposal was put to the Council that, in view of the supreme importance of the federation of the Six, the Campaign for 1952-3 should give priority to political action (as apart from education) and above all to action within the Six countries. It was turned down flat, with the unanimous support even of those delegations which stood to gain from the proposed distribution of very substantial funds. This was partly a matter of expediency; the organizations connected with the Campaign could not have held together had it involved a political commitment. But there was also the feeling that one Iron Curtain is enough, and that the proposed policy ran the risk of making Europe without making Europeans.

It is dangerous, said a Belgian delegate, to make Europe with a steam-hammer. Europe is not defined by some unique body of qualities not present elsewhere in the world. It is rather the place which has, so to speak, *all* the characteristics found everywhere else; where all the forces which are re-shaping the world are present in full strength. Europe is not so much a melting-pot as a vast laboratory for the problems of a pluralist society. The mixing of elements in the European laboratory is, experience shows, immensely fruitful. But it can also lead very quickly to dispiriting confusion or devastating explosions. Always, everywhere, the leaders in a major program of social change need to insure that each interest affected at the very least understands what is being done, and if possible goes along with or actively supports it. In a case like that of Europe this is absolutely essential. But it has not been done.

The man in the European street does not, by and large, feel that European unity is relevant to his day to day problems, nor that the difficulties likely to arise along the way—unemployment due to the disappearances of uneconomic industries, for example, or to changes in monetary policy—have been thought through and provided against. The massive Communist vote in France and Italy is one proof of the new Schuman colossus' feet of clay. Another is the blank incomprehension, the vague suspicions of Italian immigrants, French inflation, or German or Belgian unemployment found in Britain, and only now beginning to be at all effectively (not yet very effectively) counteracted. "Restrictive economics" is still, along with Germany, the Bevanite trump card against "clerical fascism" and "l'Europe vaticane."

The research, education, and action to which this points need a bigger frame than that even of the Six. The economy of the Six is not viable by itself. The minimum unit is all Europe and the Commonwealth; if not also, as the last Annual Report of the European Payments Union observed, Latin America.

BUT if the framework of the Six is too narrow, that of the Atlantic Community is too wide for the detailed, down-to-earth study and exchange of experience that Europe needs. This is a matter simply of geography. I can travel to Paris in half the time and for less money than in a first-class sleeper to Edinburgh, and to Geneva for either less time but more money, or the same money but in more time. In such a context even a compartively poor organization may conduct Europe-wide activities, and it is possible to think in terms of a mass exchange of visits between countries. The Atlantic Community, stretching from San Francisco to Erzerum, is a paradise for VIP's. Europe still comes about the size of the common man.

The right answer would then seem for the moment to be to make major decisions about defense, economics, and the balance of power a matter for NATO, or for other inter-continental organizations such as GATT. The Council of Europe, and the various specialist organizations other than those actually incorporated into the Six, would remain as centers of more detailed planning and execution, chiefly in the fields of economic and social policy. Above all, they would be centers of mass education; an effort to associate with the European idea all the living forces of Europe, whether organized in churches, trade unions, youth organizations or whatever it may be; and to do this in the village, the firm, and the neighborhood.

In the long run, I suspect that we shall come back to the idea of an all-European federation, with Britain in it: and with the European Federation itself included, in its turn, in an Atlantic federation. I am probably jaundiced about lawyers; but I suspect very much that debates about federation, confederation, and the rest are in the present circumstances of Europe a legal quibble. Britain has concrete, inescapable commitments in Europe, in terms of army divisions, or of trade, monetary, or colonial policy. Only complete and irreparable lunacy on the part of the leaders of both major parties would cause Britain to withdraw from these commitments, or to execute them at her own free will. On the other hand, these commitments are limited by others, equally concrete, to the Commonwealth or the United States. *De facto,* Britain is not a sovereign state in the old sense, and we British know it. It does not seem beyond the wit of man to devise legal formulas which would express this fact.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY.

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THE STAGE

MY DARLIN' AIDA

BENEATH the Spanish moss with which Lemuel Ayers has framed "My Darlin' Aida," and the lustrous silks and brocades in which he has dressed its company, lies an assertion of wealth too raw and imperious to ignore. Money is in the very grain and texture of the musical play under consideration; it announces its presence in the wild proliferation of color and fabric—so many hues and shades, such a luxuriance of visual detail—that the stage at the Winter Garden alternately dazzles, shimmers, glows. It is inevitable that such an extravagance of the scenic imagination must establish its own authority.

But no amount of optical legerdemain can disguise the fact that "My Darlin' Aida" is culturally schizophrenic. All manner of superficial parallels can surely be drawn between the Egypt of the Pharaohs and the American South of the Civil War, and Mr. Charles Friedman, entrepreneur of this mammoth affair, has neglected none of them. He gives us an Aida still in bondage, while Rhadames has been translated into a pale Confederate officer, Amneris into an arrogant Southern belle, and priests into an organization vaguely KKK in flavor.

Most of the subsidiary details have weathered this excursion in time with ease, and theoretically, the enterprise would seem to be plausible, even interesting. But Mr. Friedman has met impenetrable resistance in the Verdi score. Italian in its broad outlines, subtly Oriental in its feeling, it defies Mr. Friedman's determined alchemy. He has found no *via media* for two distinct historical styles, and the evening is devoted to recording their hopeless collision. Eye and ear have rarely disputed so angrily or with so devastating an effect.

The first casualty in this cultural Armageddon is the libretto. Mr. Friedman has sought to translate Verdi's emotional pressures into the literal terms of ante-bellum chivalry, and to quote Mr. Walter Lippmann on a recent political candidate, he has not mastered his fundamental problem. Thus, Aida is no longer "celeste" to Rhadames; she has become "darlin'." Indeed, the first quatrain of this aria, hastily transcribed in the dark, is quite representative:

I need you, Aida
Sweet Darlin' Aida
I need you beside me
Close by my side.

But ear hath not heard some of Mr. Friedman's choicest locutions. His imagination seems to have capitulated to a rhyming dictionary. He ties one of Verdi's thumping marches to a rather ghastly lyric called "Me and Lee." Another of the opera's highest points is shattered by a soprano shrieking "March on for Tennessee!" And when he is not indulging in such militant mediocrities, Mr. Friedman succumbs entirely to pedestrian sentimentality: "O Sky, Goodbye" is his bald and graceless title for Aida's lovely adieu.

With Franz Allers in the pit, and Robert Shaw magnificently directing the choral portions, what survives is a bold, impressive reading of the score. Hanya Holm's choreography is inventive and charming, but it too partakes of the general schizoid nature of the proceedings: what are all those people hopping about *for*? In Dorothy Sarnoff and Elaine Malbin, Mr. Friedman has engaged two of the theatre's most accomplished singing actresses, and their scenes together are flooded with irresistible force and passion. But even they cannot save "My Darlin' Aida", and for all its luxuriant surface, it remains essentially sterile—in the most precise sense of the word, a pastiche. It employs several distinguished and even great talents, but it has set them operating in a vacuum. (*At the Winter Garden.*)

DIAL M FOR MURDER

MURDER again takes its place as a fine art in Frederick Knott's excellent melodrama, skilfully transplanted from London to New York by Mr. Maurice Evans. Mr. Knott is a young master of the world of missing latchkeys and hidden attache cases; he knows that life is much more interesting if we keep the doors shut on the subconscious and worry only about that Inspector from Scotland Yard. His play has scarcely opened with some conventional patter ("Can't I get you something to drink?") before he draws several blackmailing letters across the track; within a very short while, he has given us an elegant young sportsman, coolly outlining the details of a proposed wife-murder to an old college friend. Mr. Knott's grasp of his craft could hardly be more admirably to the point.

The pleasures of vicarious murder are wholly irrational, and I have no intention at this point of going into the reasons behind the cult of the mystery story. Yet as a specimen of a difficult genre, "Dial M For Murder" does seem to me wonderfully dexterous and entertaining and it is played by Mr. Evans & Company for rather more than it is worth. No monster has been quite so fearfully engaging as Mr. Evans, disposing of any incriminating evidence and cheerfully going ahead with his awful plans, clearly untroubled by the slightest ethical scruple. He and Miss Gusti Huber, who conveys brilliantly the pathos of a victimized wife, give the play that extra dimension of conviction which carries it past any number of implausible shoals.

There is also some of the finest acting of the season in John Williams' impeccable, polished playing of the Inspector, and Richard Derr brings a bracing draught of normal, healthy air into Mr. Knott's little madhouse.

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Within its self-imposed limitations, there will be no split juries on "Dial M For Murder": it is a most capital divertissement, and a worthy addition to a small, select company. (*At the Plymouth.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

BETTER WITH A DRAMAMINE

AFTER Lowell Thomas finishes his introduction to the new wonder entertainment called "This is Cinerama," the screen suddenly grows in size and Cinerama itself overwhelms you. When I say "overwhelms," I'm putting it mildly. Actually Cinerama takes you for a ride—literally and figuratively—a ride on a roller-coaster at Coney Island. And because of the three-dimensional aspects of Cinerama and the fact that the sound comes from all parts of the theater, you actually get the sensation of being on a roller-coaster.

After this first breathless experience with Cinerama, the next item is fortunately a nice, cultural scene photographed and recorded in a theater and showing the dance of the priestesses in *Aida*. And this is followed by a helicopter ride over Niagara Falls.

By the end of the third scene I was completely sold on Cinerama and ready to agree with the descriptions tossed about after its world premiere in New York City on September 30, 1952: fascinating, thrilling, sensational, revolutionary, powerful. And by the end of the final scene I was even ready to agree that Cinerama is the most important step in motion picture history since sound.

At present, Cinerama is being shown in only one theater, but Cinerama Productions Corp. reports it has equipment ready for three more installations. Although it may still be in the novelty stage as far as its spellbound audience is concerned, it is no toy financially. Installing its complicated equipment (that includes three separate projectors, six sound tracks and a huge curved screen almost six times the area of a standard movie screen) obviously runs into big money. And making the films themselves is expensive. So it isn't likely that many motion picture palaces, even those worried about the growing popularity of TV, will soon be converted for Cinerama. Cinerama may be a novelty now, but it certainly presents unlimited possibilities for the motion picture industry, once they start making fictional and biographical films in this new medium. The idea is almost frightening; and the observation of Robert E. Sherwood gives one food for thought: "You've put into the hands of a playwright a tool by which we can submit the audience to any experience we want to give them, and what is more, condition them for that experience."

THE new Tyrone Power opus, "Pony Soldier," a western with battling Indians and colorful Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is typical of the kind of feature film that would be greatly enhanced by Cinerama effects. Most of its story takes place in Montana where Mountie Tyrone has been sent by his superiors to rescue a couple of whites captured by the Cree Indians, who like the hunting better in Montana than in Canada where they belong. Guided by a halfbreed scout (Thomas Gomez), our hero goes into the dangerous Indian country, and, like a big boy, right into the Cree camp.

Actually "Pony Soldier" tries to be another semi-documentary thriller like "Broken Arrow," in which frontiersman Jimmy Stewart brought about peace between Apaches and U.S. But "Pony Soldier" fails to make us understand the Indians' point of view and, for an action film, it get much too talky during the tense scenes when the Mountie hangs out with the Crees. Cinerama could have done wonders with the mountainous scenery—which already looks pretty elegant in this film's good Technicolor. Since you already know that the Mountie always gets his man, it will come as no surprise to you at the finale when Tyrone leads the whole tribe of Crees back into Canada.

I'M not sure that Cinerama could do much for the new remake of "The Prisoner of Zenda," since most of the thrills in Anthony Hope's romantic adventure piece take place indoors and are so imbued with the spirit of this mythical kingdom that Cinerama's realities might detract from the hokum. In this version Stewart Granger plays the dual roles: the dissolute king and the dare-devil Englishman who saves Ruritania. He is appropriately dashing and gallant in the love scenes with Princess Flavia (Deborah Kerr) and thoroughly courageous and agile in the famous long duel with Rupert of Hentzau. James Mason plays this latter role with just the right villainous flair and has no trouble stealing the picture—mainly because the role itself is full of such delightfully wicked make-believe. Rupert is the kind of a villain you love to hiss. The picture has been extravagantly costumed and set, and if you like your escape completely escapist, this is for you.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Coming: December 5
The Commonweal's
Christmas Book Number

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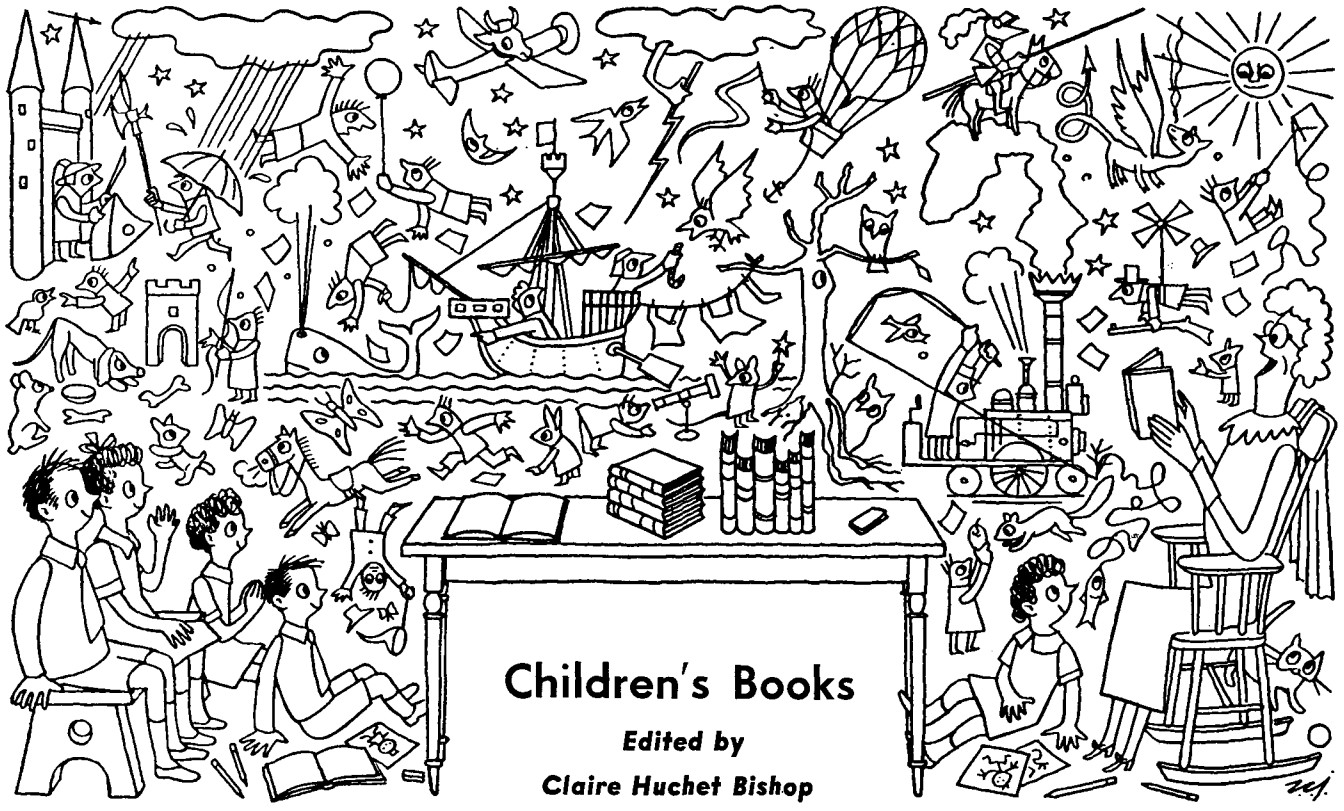

HE NOW SPEAKS LATIN

Pinocchio: Prince of the Puppets

PIERO BARGELLINI

Translated by Ida Schroeder

IN the statistics of world-wide translations I believe the sequence to be: first, the Gospels, and, second, *Pinocchio*. Naturally, the Gospels lead by far, but coming down to the works of almost universal distribution, one encounters the "brain child" of Carlo Collodi (Lorenzini). The proximity, or rather the Gospels-Pinocchio succession, might seem irreverent. For my part, this is not so, because I have always believed *Pinocchio* to be a work far more serious than is generally thought.

The fundamental motives in *Pinocchio* have an importance and a consequence that are uncommon. Those who have stopped at the small-talk moralizing of "What you do will be done unto you," "You will repent it," and "Lies have short legs and a long nose," have little understood *Pinocchio,* a book in which the name of the Lord is never spoken in vain, but in which, perhaps unknowingly, He is spoken of very often. The fable of *Pinocchio,* at least in my opinion, has a surprising resemblance to another story in which the protagonists are related as loving father and prodigal son.

Geppetto, the father, creates the puppet, for whom he desires every happiness. But Pinocchio, as soon as he is able, rebels against him and runs away. Fled from the father, Pinocchio expiates his rebellion with mistakes, with misfortunes and with grief. He risks death; he suffers imprisonment. He has no peace until in the body of the shark he finds his father again. Then begins the puppet's redemption, in the light of which emerges, not as extraneous, but as ever-present, the most mysterious, the most wonderful image in the whole book—the beautiful Child with blue hair. I may be mistaken; I may be extreme; but this image has always reminded me of another image in blue.

In a short work I have already suggested a theological interpretation of Pinocchio. As time passes and Pinocchio becomes more and more a universal book, I

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find myself more and more firmly convinced that in these pages lies a deep significance. There can be no other explanation for the enormous success of a book which was created almost by chance, and which both young and old, people of every race and color, accept as only the truth is accepted. Art alone cannot account for this, nor fantasy either, if that fantasy does not represent a truth that is eternal and universal.

CARLO Collodi was attending the seminary at Colle Val d'Elsa. The events of 1846 stripped the cassock from his back. He was a follower of Mazzini, and anti-clerical as well, but the truth of the Catechism never left his mind—nor, perhaps, his heart. His mother prayed to the Madonna for him incessantly.

Carlo Collodi was an unrepenting journalist. Journalism was the great passion of the 1800's. "Poets are born," wrote Collodi, "but one does not have to be born a journalist. The truth is, once a journalist, always a journalist. Journalism is like the shirt of Nesso; once donned and fastened, there is no getting out of it."

Furthermore, journalism brought with it another passion, that of the theatre. "In this world," Collodi wrote again, "the two things most easy of accomplishing are—sins of desire and comedies. Who in Italy is so illiterate that he does not know how to write a comedy? Who is the gallant among us who can close his eyes in the shadow of death without the remorse of having committed a mortal sin in four or five acts?"

He too, under the guise of comedy, of romance and of story, committed some of these sins. This he confessed very contritely, and received absolution with his *Pinocchio,* which came later. "Now," he wrote to a friend, "now I shall devote myself to writing only for children. Grownups are too hard to satisfy; they are not for me."

The truth is, children are less easily satisfied than adults. But in 1881 there was in Italy a great movement toward juvenile literature. Born of this period was *The Children's Friend.* An eminent scholar, Angelo de Gubernatis, created *Cordelia.* A world-famous literary figure, Ferdinand Martini, founded *The Journal for Children.* Carlo Collodi was asked to collaborate. He replied neither Yes nor No. Finally, one morning, he sent to Guido Biagi, editor of *The Journal for Children,* a letter which has since become famous: "I am sending you this children's story. Do with it as you see fit; but if you print it, pay me well so I may be spurred on to continue it." And so, Pinocchio was born.

Like many other historical documents, this letter too has been subjected to criticism. If Collodi needed money so badly, it was whispered, that means he was faced with a very urgent obligation. He gambled, and therefore most likely he had some gambling debt to pay. There was even mention of one of those promissory notes, which in the 1800's came to be called "butterflies;" therefore, Pinocchio was born of a "butterfly."

However, the nephew of Collodi denies resolutely all this gossip. True, Uncle Collodi did gamble, and regularly lost. He was, however, always in a position to pay his debts (debts which at that time were called, no one knows why, "debts of honor"). He lived with his brother, who was director of the Ginori factory and who had a carriage and matched horses in addition to a lordly mansion in Via Rondinelli. It was in this very mansion that Collodi died very suddenly on the night of October 26, 1890.

About ten years ago, wishing to honor the memory of Collodi with a stone tablet in his native city of Florence, it was planned to attach the tablet to the house in which he was born on November 28, 1826. However, that house was too big and too palatial to be marred with the figure of Geppetto and that of the lowly urchin Pinocchio. Attempts were then made to identify the house in which Collodi, in all probability, was born. In Via Taddea one was found of suitable Pinocchio proportions, indicated by Collodi's nephew as having been pointed out by his uncle, who often said to him: "I was born here." The stone tablet bears this inscription: "In this house was born Carlo Lorenzini, called Collodi, Father of Pinocchio."

NO sooner had Geppetto set to work on his carving than he began to think of a name for his creation.

"What name shall I give him?" he asked himself. "I think I will call him Pinocchio. This name will bring him luck. I once knew a family of Pinocchi. There was Pinocchio the father, Pinocchia the mother, and Pinocchio the children, and all of them fared well. The richest of them was a beggar of alms."

Prior to this, confiding to Master Cherry, he said: "I want to make a beautiful wooden puppet, but a puppet so wonderful he could dance, and fence and do somersaults. With this puppet I would tour the world."

And so it was. Pinocchio has traveled all over the world, translated into every living tongue. And now he has also been translated into the most solemn of dead languages—Latin! He has become Pinoculus. Who would have dreamed of this at the time he sold his spelling book, which had cost Geppetto his winter coat, for four sous! Who would have thought that some day he would speak Latin! His thin little voice suddenly begins to say: "Ne me, quaeso, gravius tutuderis!" Then, "Eheu, tu mihi male fecisti!"

Who taught him to speak Latin? It was Prof. Enrico Mafficini, who published through the Marzocco firm of Florence a Pinocchio "in latinum sermonem convers-

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us." It appears that the Maffacini translation was very well done. This is vouched for in a clear and witty preface by Prof. Giovanni Battista Pighi of the University of Bologna. Joining him are Prof. Riposati of Sacred Heart University, Prof. Cataudella of Catania, Prof. Bernini of Parma, as well as the humanists, Monsignor Alberto Costa, Bishop of Lecce and Monsignor Bacci, Papal Secretary.

It might be asked: Was it really necessary to translate Pinocchio into Latin? That it should be translated into Finnish for the children of Finland, or into Coptic for the children of the Copts is perfectly understandable. But in Latin? Is there perhaps still a Roman colony at the mouth of the Tiber river? Or is the translation merely an elegant academic exercise?

To these questions Prof. Pighi replies, explaining that the translation has an excellent didactic aim. Boys love Pinocchio. They may even pardon his Latin. Prof. Maffacini wanted to offer beginners a Latin reader that did not start with the usual: "Miltiades, Cimonis filius, Atheniensis, cum antiquitate generis," but which presents at once the lively dispute between Magister Cerasus et iracundissimus Josephetus, called Polendina. Who knows but what the boys will not find this Latin diverting, and, reading it, may begin to acquire an ear for it. That would be a wonderful thing, a great new merit in the wooden puppet.

Several years ago another scholar, Prof. Carlesi, issued a *Pinocchio* with philological and esthetic notes. Will a *Pinocchio* some day be issued with theological and moral notes? I ask this in all earnestness; in fact, I am consumed by the question!

TOO MUCH "GOLDEN MEDIOCRITY"

The Search for Enchantment

THERE are some excellent books in this year's output. However, the number of those which could be done without is too great. All these suffer from the same disease: mediocrity.

It is evident that this mediocrity does not stem from lack of material means: paper, ink and machines are plentiful. The physical aspect of books is admirably cared for: layout, printing, pictures, reproduction, all this brought to an ever greater point of perfection, will again, and rightly, cause people in foreign countries to gasp with the proper admiration and respect due such genuine achievement. Once more, this year, publishers of children's books in America have outdone themselves: they have improved their technique, boldly experimented and worked with care and zeal.

For a quarter of century the field of children's books in America has been a source of inspiration and perennial wonder. It is rich and varied in outstanding contributions. It has enjoyed the privilege of a farsighted and brilliant mind such as Anne Carroll Moore's. It has benefited from the invaluable trade help of a Frederic G. Melcher, the interest of such intelligent critics as Mary Gould Davis, Ann Eaton, Mary Lamberton Becker, Louise Seaman Bechtel, and many others. It has been the object of devotion of countless librarians, teachers and parents. It has aroused the enthusiasm of thousands of children. And finally it has been so lucky as to attract a bevy of first class illustrators and some excellent writers. We are rich indeed, and no one but a misanthropic mind would sneer at our abundance.

But if so, then *noblesse oblige,* and the production of this year gives unmistakable signs that it is high time that we ask ourselves where we are going.

If our aim is just to produce more and more at a lower cost, if it is simply to cover all the topics on earth, if it is to tickle the mind or kill time, then we are on the right track: let us be more and more productivity-minded and flood the market with children's books of "high level, conscientious, blameless, golden mediocrity," as Clifton Fadiman so aptly put it in *Holiday* last August. That is the kind of book which makes adult buyers bask in secured contentment. It is an easy and sure hit. And who can blame some of the hard pressed juvenile editors for going in for it?

Who could even blame the writers? For, after all, the assembly line has to be fed somewhere, and who does the feeding but the authors? They too have to live. I know. So we have a deluge of books which are perfections of sheer manufacturing, right up to the writing itself. The writers know their job, they have technique and craftsmanship. When they don't, the illustrator is always ready to take over and turn out a most satisfactory product, a commodity endowed with enough titillation to compete with television.

This is not a slur at illustrators. Far from it. But the very fact that many books would have no value at all without illustrations is something to think about. A picture book is one thing, a good text illustrated is another, but a poor text well illustrated still makes a bad book, no matter how excellent the talent of the illustrator and the lavishness of the publisher. I will

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not mention names, though sometimes I think that it might be helpful to everybody, including writers. I hope that if I ever write such a book (it can happen to anyone), somebody hits me on the head.

Generally speaking, I want to point out, apart from the shortcoming already mentioned, that the proportion of factual books seems to me too great when compared to stories. Scientific books are excellent, and, at that, I wish we had even better written ones than we have now, though the American effort along that line is quite outstanding. We need more factual books written in such a way that a direct feeling is established between the subject matter and the child, and I think only top people in their fields can do that. As it is, this year, there are not enough good stories in proportion to factual books for a balanced diet. Let us have knowledge and learning by all means, provided we know that this is not everything. There is cognition, *co-naissance* as Claudel used to say, and that is acquired, in literature, only through stories, that is through experiences lived-through over again.

Many stories would have gained by going no further than the bedside. There are too many stories of small daily events conspicuously "enriched." There is poverty of vocabulary and of feeling. The product is wholesome, pasteurized, homogenized, harmless, nondisturbing and dead.

STUDYING some of the books which have come from England, one wonders what is the matter with many American writers of children's books. Why have so few books the power to transport, to hold us breathless, to make time stop and leave us with the feeling of having shared in a great secret? Very simple books can do that, a nonsense story as well as a tragedy, provided the writer is not content with mere recording but rather re-creates, discovers and questions.

It is sadly evident that too many of us have little to say. Worse, it is obvious that this lack does not disturb us. We have everything down pat. We know how to *make* everything, including friends. Whether you are six or sixteen, there are plenty of stories which point out how to be loved, how to get along, be adjusted, how to be successful and religious. Everything boils down to learning the "trick" of living and, barely hidden, is the smugness that we know how. Worthwhile as a means, this ever present know-how when it becomes an end in itself kills the soul The know-how materialistic criterion (if it works it is good), pervades many children's books.

But that which is of the spirit, which is lasting, which transcends time and space, which exists irrespective of gadgets or theories and knows no boundaries of race or creeds, does not "work." It grows. When it is present in a story, children sense it and they take the book to their hearts, as indicated by the popularity of books common to widely separated countries. These are books which in some way, either seriously or humorously, deal with the mystery of the human heart.

A few American children's books this year have this universal appeal, this timeless quality which belongs not to the "know-how" but to the "know-why." These books we hail here, joyously and gratefully. But there are too many others for us not to be concerned.

If we want to go beyond "golden mediocrity," technique and talent are not sufficient. What we need is the capacity to wonder what it is all about. This takes time. We have "to let it happen," not the story itself but the mood for its creation. And my conviction is that therein lies the heart of the trouble with too many of us American writers. We do not just let it happen. Why? Because evidently we do not feel this is absolutely necessary. Why don't we?

Because for the last ten years, at least, the general sensate atmosphere we live in in America hides for many of us the prerequisite of creation. There is overstimulation everywhere, through speed, compression of distances, crowding of impressions, multiplication of excitations through gadgets, information, advertising, etc. There is also loss of contact with humanity through absence of nationwide acute experience of suffering—our worst years go back to the early 1930's.

What shall we do? Shall we turn the clock back? Go and bury ourselves on a desert island or move to a less fortunate country? Or shall we deliberately strive "to let it happen" right where we are? That is, shall we search for this space and silence within, this divesting of non-essentials, this emptying of oneself, this state of grace which nurtures creation, poetry and children's stories alike? Or shall we blatantly go on producing, with skillful and efficient gymnastics of the mind, more and more sanitary proof books that have nothing to offer but a self-satisfied wholesomeness, which bog the children down and cuts them off from the rest of the world. It is wholeness which is needed, the unfettered strong flight of the human spirit.

It is time that we writers of children's books in America take stock, shake away the material pressure around us, throw away the glittering complacency, and walk the narrow path of creativeness. Then, perhaps, the blessing of true inspiration will more often descend upon us. There is a price to pay for the awareness, understanding and sensitivity which go toward the creation of a children's story worth passing on in print.

The list below has been compiled by the Editors of The Commonweal, Ernestine Evans and by me. We have not read all the books published this year and we are not infallible in our judgments. But at least, as I have tried to explain here, we are looking for enchantment, wonder and humanity.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

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Childrens' Book List

Picture Books and Easy Stories

A First Life of Christ for Little Catholics: in the Words of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Pictures by Bruno Frost. Catechetical Guild. $.25. A popular, straight, simple and unsentimental little book with excellent choice of words.

A for the Ark. By Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, Lee Shepard. $2. The Bible story of the Flood in alphabet form. Gay, colors galore, and humorous text printed in large type. The artist has had a good time and so do we.

Ape in a Cape: An Alphabet of Odd Animals. By Fritz Eichenberg. Harcourt. $2. Every page, picture and caption of this distinguished and original picture book is a surprise and a joy.

Baby Animals. By Garth Williams. (Golden Books) Simon and Schuster. $1. A precious little book with the kind of thick pages so liked by small children.

The Bears on Hemlock Mountain. By Alice Dagleish. Scribner's. $2. The story of a boy's fear and courage told with suspense. There *were* bears on Hemlock Mountain. Good for reading aloud. Would be a find for radio, so full of suspense is the tale.

Boy With a Harpoon. By William Lipkin. Ill. by Nicolas Mordvinoff. Harcourt. $2.25. A very well told story, by a distinguished anthropologist, of a little Eskimo boy, with the kind of illustrations which sets you dreaming . . . dreaming . . .

Buffalo Bill. By Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday. $2.75. Buffaloes and Buffalo Bill, the Wild West and the Wild West show, a very American picture book.

Even Steven. By Will and Nicolas. Harcourt. $2.25. Two poets, a writer and an illustrator, have created this little colt and his small master. For serene and perennial contemplation before going to sleep.

Five Little Monkeys. By Juliet Kepes. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50. Some arresting colored pictures and drawings accompany this laughable story.

The Great Othello: The Story of a Seal. By Tony Palazzo. Viking. $2. In pictures and text, Othello, the fine Carnival performer, is wholly irresistible.

Jenny's Adopted Brothers. Written and Ill. by Esther Averill. Harper. $1.50. More of the lovable little cat Jenny through the simple means of true art.

Lunch for Lennie. By Catherine Woolley. Morrow. $2. Meg Wollberg's pictures and Catherine Woolley's perfect text is one of the best of the autumn books.

Market Day for Ti Andre. By Maia Rodman. Ill. by Wilson Bigaud. Viking. $2. Ti Andre lives in Haiti and through his winning simple story with gay pictures we come to know and love his country and his people.

The Magic Currant Bun. By John Symonds. Ill. by Andre Francois. Lippincott. $2. All over Paris everyone chased the magic currant bun which made every wish come true. Incisive, witty pictures and text.

New World for Nellie. By Rowland Emmet. Harcourt $2. Nellie is a railroad engine who comes to us from *Punch*. This is typical English humor, and children who take to it will enjoy this picture book immensely.

One Morning in Maine. By Robert McCloskey. Viking. $2. All built around Sal's losing her first tooth. This momentous event is the occasion for a large picture book which is one of the best introductions to what American life really looks like and is, instead of what Hollywood would have us, and, alas, the rest of the world, believe it is.

From "The Voyage of the Dawn Trader" (Macmillan)

Percy, Polly and Pete. Story and pictures by Clare Turlay Newberry. Harper. $2. Some of the most beautiful fluffy cats the artist has ever done, and a good story.

Petunia's Christmas. Written and Ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Knopf. $2. Is a goose a goose? Read, look and laugh.

Play With Leaves and Flowers. By Millicent E. Selsam. Morrow. $2. Seeds have houses as animals have, and there are games that flowers and leaves and children can play together.

Puss in Boots: a free translation from the French of Charles Perrault, with pictures by Marcia Brown. Scribner's. $2. Truly enchanting pictorial interpretation of Master Cat, and a better translation than any other I know so far.

Who's Upside Down? Words and Pictures by Crockett Johnson. W. R. Scott. $1.75. A kangaroo solves the problem of gravity in an unexpected and entertaining way.

Middle Age Group

All Kinds of Cats. Edited and Photographed by Walter Chandoha. Knopf. $3. Arresting photographs of cats accompanied with short selections from famous writers, and description of breeds. All ages.

The Adventures of Ambrose. By Rosemary Anne Sesson. Ill. by Astrid Walford. Dutton. $2.50. How the Mouse Ambrose and his friend Simon the field-

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mouse went to London to visit Ambrose' great aunt and to see the royal family. A wise, delicate, humorous tale in the best English tradition.

Amahl and the Night Visitors. By Gian-Carlo Menotti. Narrative adaptation by Frances Frost. Ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Whittlesey House. $2.75. The exact dialogue of the opera has been preserved and the beautiful illustrations carry the oriental splendor of the Epiphany Kings.

Boy of the Pyramids: A Mystery of Ancient Egypt. By Ruth Fosdick Jones. Ill. by Dorothy Bailey Morse. Random House. $2.50. Mrs. Jones has not only taught ancient history, but she loves it enough to make it come to life in an exciting mystery story.

The Boy Who Stole the Elephant. By Jullily H. Kohler. Ill. by Lee Ames. Knopf. $2.50. Takes place in Ohio and is an exciting short tale for all boys who love initiative, circus and elephants.

Children of the Blizzard. By Heluiz Washburne and Anauta. Ill. by Kurt Wiese. John Day. $2.50. Takes place in remote Baffin Island where Anauta herself spent her childhood. Eskimo life, so full of real adventures for children, makes for absorbing reading. Detailed explanations of Eskimo games make one feel like starting to play them at once!

Children of the Great Smoky Mountains. By May Justus. Ill. by Robert Henneberger. Dutton. $2.50. Written by someone who knows the country and its people and loves them. Good Americana.

Crissy at the Wheel. By Mildred Laurence. Ill. by Marvin Bileck. Harcourt. $2.50. Well told story about Crissy's Papa and Crissy who start selling automobiles in a small Michigan town in 1901 when everybody thought and said that "nobody was ever going to take these dreadful things seriously."

From "Twenty and Ten" (Viking)

Family Grandstand. By Carol Ryrie Brink. Ill. by Jean Macdonald Porter. Viking. $2.50. An up-to-date, lovable and lively family in a middle west University town: Father teaches history, Mother writes mystery stories and makes doughnuts, Susan, George and Dumpling are always full of activity and ideas, and the football field is only around the corner.

Felicity Finds a Way. By Eleanor M. Jewett. Viking. $2.75. 1783 in New York. Felicity lived with her grandparents who were loyalists, but her brother Harry had joined Washington's army. Felicity loved her grandparents and she loved her brother. This is a fine story of a growth in understanding told simply and convincingly.

Four Legs and a Tail. By Flavia Gag. Ill. by the Author. Holt. $2.50. The tail weighed 50 pounds and belonged to Sing Wing, a sheep of a special race. She is the pet of twins Robert and Roberta and has all sorts of adventures. Unpretentious, homey and gay.

The Gray Eyes Family. By Edith J. Agnew. Drawings by Jean Martinez. Friendship Press. $2. A tender story of a Navaho family. Large print.

Jennifer is Eleven. Written and Ill. by Eunice Young Smith. Bobbs Merrill. $2.50. A pet is a pet even when he is a bull, and how could Jennifer possibly part with him? She could not, and what happens then makes for fresh, simple reading.

Joel. By Nora Benjamin Kubie. Harper. $2.50. Not just the events, but the ideas that made the American revolution a turning point in human history. A young people's novel about the young Jew, Joel Davidov, follower of Nathan Hale and Tom Paine. A love story for teen-agers.

Little Fox. By Frances Frost. Ill. by Morgan Dennis. Whittlesey House. $2.25. Told from the point of view of the fox, with charm, humor and the refreshing feeling for nature which characterizes the author. Large print.

The Long Arctic Night. By Kurt Schmeltzer. Watts. Translated from the German, this account of the struggle for the North East passage and the heroism of the band led by Barents for whom the Barents Sea was named is told in the words of one of the crew.

Looking-For-Something: the Story of a Stray Burro of Ecuador. By Ann Nolan Clark. Ill. by Leo Politi. Viking. $2.50. Ecuador and its people come to life in this poetic tale beautifully written and illustrated.

Mary Poppins in the Park. By P. L. Travers. Ill. by Mary Shephard. Harcourt. $2.50. Mary Poppins at it again, tart, wise, stalwart and totally unpredictable. Absorbingly funny.

Mat and Mandy and the Little Old Car. By Ruth Simon. With pictures by Lisl Weil. Crowell. $2.50. A most welcome book about a car which is not a shiny brand new one, and about a family which loves old things and has loads of fun on a shoestring.

Mr. Heff and Mr. Ho: the Story of Mr. Flowerfield and the Organ Grinder. By Janette Sebring Lowrex. Pictures by Peggy Bacon. Harper. $2.50. What happened when the villages of Odd Corners and Even Green which had always been friends, began to quarrel. A sensitive, beautifully told story, full of fantasy and wisdom. The pictures in keeping with the text have the originality, character and beauty which have made Peggy Bacon's work famous.

Shaken Days. By Marion Garthwaite. Ill. by Ursula Koering. Messner. $2.75. Across from San Francisco,

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the life of a family two weeks before and ten days after the 1906 earthquake. A story with an authentic flavor.

Thirty-one Brothers-and-Sisters. By Reba Paeff Mirsky. Ill. by W. T. Mars. Wilcox and Follett. $2.95. The father of all these children is a Zulu chief, and the little girl Nomusa, heroine of the story, wishes she were a boy. The author knows how to impart the fineness and loveliness of these people and of their primitive civilization in a tender tale with excitement and suspense. Winner of the third Charles W. Follett award.

The Treasure Trove of the Sun. By M. Prishvin. Trans. by Tatiana Balkoff-Browne. Ill. by Feodor Rojankowsky. Viking. $2.75. Two orphan children live all by themselves in a village of present day Russia. They go cranberrying and encounter a terrifying adventure through which quite a bit of sound ethics is learned. This book is a work of art from all standpoints: the writing is superb, the pictures have breathless beauty, the layout of the book is perfect. A book to own, read and treasure for years to come.

Twenty and Ten. By Claire Huchet Bishop. Viking. $2.50. Behind the surface of this story of twenty French boys and girls evacuated to a country school during the war, who shelter ten refugee Jewish youngsters, shines the first of the great tales of Christendom. *Twenty and Ten* is a little war novel that will be long remembered.

From "Ape in a Cape" (Harcourt)

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. By C. S. Lewis. Ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan. $2.75. Those who are not familiar with the land of Narnia to which C. S. Lewis has taken us in previous books will want to know more about it after reading this beautifully written, highly imaginative tale. From England again comes this book which rings so true to childhood and imparts to everyone joy and serenity.

The Wind Blows Free. By Loula Grace Erdman. Dodd, Mead. $2.50. A family story about the Pierces who went to the Panhandle of Texas at the turn

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Komoon! Capturing the Chad Elephant. By Heinrich Oberjohan. Tr. by Rhoda de Terra. Pantheon. $3. A thrilling account of the four years Oberjohan spent at Lake Chad capturing elephants for Hagenbeck. All about the way of life of elephants, which is so little known, and, besides, hair raising adventures. An adult book which will captivate older boys.

Meph: the Pet Skunk. By John L. George and Jean George. Ill. by Jean George. Dutton. $2.75. Caring for Meph, young Will Lite forgets his boy's heartaches and the grimness of life on the farm, and, eventually he becomes interested in scientific farming and thereby his whole family is pulled out of trouble. John George lectures in Conservation at Vassar College and Mrs. George is an artist and a writer. The book is packed with scientific observations and yet reads like a thrilling adventure. Boys, especially in the country, will love it, if they get a chance at it before Dad!

Peter Turns Sheepman. By Olive W. Burt. Ill. with photographs. Holt. $2.50. A fascinating account of a boy's experience on a sheep ranch in Utah, with excellent photographs.

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The Shepherds of Fatima. By John de Marchi, I.M.C. Retold in English by Elizabeth Cobb. Ill. by Jeanyee Wong. Sheed and Ward. $2. The author is Portuguese and is intimately acquainted with the child of Fatima, Lucia, and the families of the other children. The writing style is best for adults, but some older girls may enjoy it.

Slipper Under Glass. By Lee Wyndham. Decorations by Vera Brock. Longmans Green. $2.50. Maggie Jones wanted to be a ballerina. This is the story of her seven years training and what she discovered. Good picture of what it requires to enter an artistic career.

Poetry

The Magic Circle. Edited by Louis Untermeyer. Harcourt Brace. $3. A wonderfully chosen collection of poems, equally for the old and wise and the young and adventuring.

Fun in American Folk Rhymes. By Ray Wood Lippincott. $2.50. *Daddy Fell Into The Pond. By Alfred Noyes. Sheed and Ward.* $2. The first gamey rhymes; and the second skilful verse but often coy.

All Together. By Dorothy Aldis. Putnam. $3. For adults, an introduction to the child's own world; and for children, recognition of themselves by a minor poet.

Far and Few. By David McCord. Little Brown. $2.50. A practitioner of light verse serves forth a picnic of verses that should set his readers to prancing in verses of their own. Gay and quotable, they are made merrier by Henry B. Kane's pictures.

Words Are Funny, A Riddle Book. Alice Salaff and Vera. Doubleday. $1.50. Amusing and highly original.

Nature Outside And Inside

Birds and Their Nests. By Olive L. Earle. Morrow. $2. Why different varieties of birds build different kinds of nests nobody really knows. A book that raises questions and that calls for observation.

The First Book of Bees. By Albert B. Tibbets. Illustrations by Helene Carter. Franklin Watts. $1.75. Lavishly illustrated and soundly related, here is a real book about bees and their honeymaking, their social organization, and the many services they render to man. First rate.

Wild Folk in the Woods. By Carroll Lane Fenton. John Day. $2.50. Dr. Fenton describes over thirty woodland animals, ranging from the Atlantic to the

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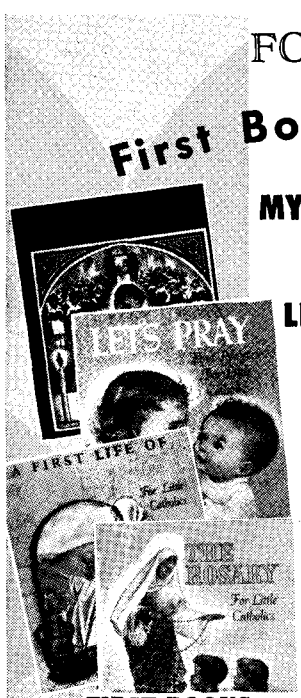

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Pacific coast, from deer to butterflies. A satisfactory guidebook.

The Golden Treasury of Natural History. By Bertha Morris Parker. Simon and Schuster. $5. This is the result of the combined efforts of seventeen artists and an extraordinary teacher at the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago. It is a big book, printed in color, well indexed, full of both wonder, facts, and an initiation into the scientific method.

Biography

Benjamin Franklin of Old Philadelphia. By Margaret Cousins. Random House. $1.50. A felicitous writer makes the grand old man of American diplomacy, invention, and common sense, and orderer of the nation's business into a living friend.

The Real Book about Andrew Jackson. By Harold Coy, Garden City. $1.25. *The Real Book about Daniel Boone. By Deane Cate. Garden City.* $1.25.

Lady Jane Grey. By Marguerite Vance. Dutton. $2.75. The heartbreaking story of a girl who became a reluctant queen at sixteen. History with enjoyable and enlightening tears.

Molly Pitcher. By Augusta Stevenson. Bobbs Merrill. $1.75. A new title in a series devoted to the childhood of famous Americans, this tells of the German-American girl who fought at the Battle of Monmouth in the American Revolution.

The Story of Florence Nightingale. By Margaret Leighton. Grosset and Dunlap. $1.50. The style in Nightingale biographies changes with the times. Here is less sentiment about the Lady with the Lamp and more detail on her hard work.

Music Makers. By Percy M. Young. With line drawings by Ida Procter. Roy. $2.50. Elgar - Schubert - Tchaikowsky - Brahms - Mendelssohn - Handel - Haydn - Wagner - Mozart - Beethoven - Bach - Purcell.

Bernard and His Dogs. By Claire Huchet Bishop. Ill. by Maurice Brevannes. Houghton Mifflin. $2. An enthralling account of the youthful adventures of gallant Bernard de Menthon in the tenth century, how he overcame tremendous obstacles to become a monk, and how the Hospice he founded high in the Alps rescues travelers even to this day.

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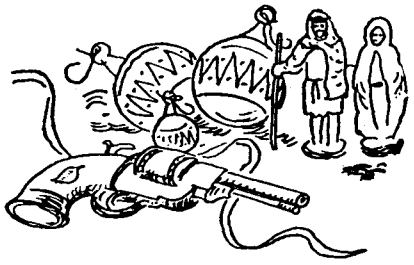

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By JOHN A. LYNCH

THE latest novel of Mauriac's to be published in this country is a direct and incisive, yet terribly bare, account of the loves and throes of love of a small group of people of Dorthe, near Bordeaux. Not unlike other Mauriac characters, the people of Dorthe are singularly unaware of any but a purely responsive and very natural love. Marie and Gilles can be a "happy pair of lovers" only because they recognize nothing beyond a natural happiness. They can be happy in sin because it is sin unrealized. These are Mauriac's people, the unblessed.

Madame Agathe and Nicolas Plassac, too, are equally unblessed, but certainly theirs, on the other hand, is an unhappy love affair. Agathe pursues Nicolas with an abject hunger, but Nicolas is overburdened with his friendship for the young Gilles. They are brought together, though, as intermediaries, as foils—she is Marie's governess, he Gilles' best friend: Gilles fences with Nicolas' friendship so that he may be near Marie, and Nicolas for the sake of this friendship promises marriage to Agathe, thus cementing the love of Gilles and Marie but throwing himself into a ridiculous position with a woman he does not love. The hold is broken only when Nicolas realizes himself a man, turns away from this life of pursuit, and the frightful Agathe is left to the desires of Marie's father.

"The picture I have painted is indeed black," Mauriac writes in a disturbing postscript to the book. "It shows mankind as warped . . . . It shows humanity untouched by Grace."

That, indeed, is the whole of it, and for this reason Mauriac apparently feels the need of a postscript. "I am afraid," he writes, "not so much that I may shock, as disconcert, those of my readers who share

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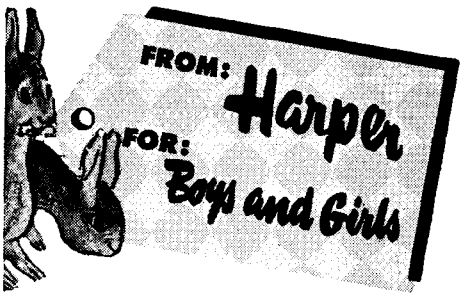
with me a religious outlook." That is the reason for the postscript: it is explanatory, from a man who has perhaps been asked to do a lot of explaining.

But the very bareness of the book, too, may have seemed cause for an author's note. And it is in this regard that the inclusion, or attachment, of a postscript is both a fortunate and an unfortunate thing. It is fortunate because it amplifies, it heightens one's understanding and therefore one's appreciation of the novel; but it is unfortunate because it puts the novel in a position where it can hardly be judged *without* the postscript. One is hardly likely to stop reading at the end of the novel, not to go on for the eight or so pages that make up the postscript, and whatever judgment is then made is necessarily already colored by Mauriac's own comments on the work and his position in relation to the work.

Mauriac writes in the postscript, for instance: " . . . . the reader is not told until the very last sentence, almost the very last word, that one of my characters is moving toward God. All the same, that 'someone' waiting for Nicolas Plassac where the road crosses the Leyrot *is* God."

The sentence to which Mauriac refers comes at the end of a passage where Nicolas, having lost Gilles, having left Agathe, is alone: "He walked on in loneliness. He was prey to a melancholy hunger which all the kingdoms of the earth could not have satisfied. His only companion was a tenderness that lay outspread like the sea beneath the mindless stars . . . . He started to walk again and reached the place where the road crossed the Leyrot. He sat upon the parapet, a stranger to himself, detached from all his fellows. It was as though he had agreed with somebody to meet him there."

Now certainly Mauriac's understanding of this passage adds to our own understanding of it. And for this reason one gets the feeling that the novel *needs* a postscript, that, perhaps, Mauriac had the idea of



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a postscript already in mind as he wrote the novel.

But it would have been better to let the novel stand alone. If there was need of an explanation, it should have been devoted solely to the author's general position in relation to his dominant theme.

Enthusiasm

THE DEVILS OF LOUDUN. By Aldous Huxley. Harper. $4.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

EXAMINATION of the psychological factors in cases of diabolical possession, real or alleged, is certain to fascinate the modern reader. Precarious on his own historical high-wire of tension between the real and the imaginary, the true and the false, the good and the evil, he is as susceptible to the suggestion of Satanic forces as any ancestor, although he may be less willing to admit it.

Such an examination is what Aldous Huxley gives us in this curious book, part factual documentary, part explication of mysticism, part religious tract—and part sophisticated Huxleyan commentary on all three.

The episode considered is the wholesale "possession" of a convent of Ursuline nuns at Loudun in the early seventeenth century, the same period of religious stress probed by the author in his novel, *Grey Eminence*. The authenticity of the possession is disputed, but the Nays, of which Mr. Huxley's is one, seem to have it, despite a number of arguments left unanswered even by this analysis.

What touched off the grotesque Loudun drama was doubtless as much the religious climate of the period as any more specific cause. This is not to say, however, that specific causes were lacking. It appears that there were three: the vicar of Loudun, the convent prioress, and the collective body of exorcists assigned to the case.

The vicar, Urbain Grandier, was a type familiar in all eras: tall, handsome, intelligent and eloquent, and considering his position, alarmingly sensual. Soeur Jeanne des Anges was also a creature of excess. Hers lay in the direction of self-dramatization; she compensated for deficiencies in charm and stature, to say nothing of piety, with a truly awesome gift for histrionics.

Soeur Jeanne's idea of romance was more earthly than divine. When she failed to attract the notice of the vicar, she announced that she was possessed, and acted out the claim. She was shortly joined in immoderate howling and raving by several of her sisters; they named the Abbe Grandier as the cause.

Enter the exorcists. Such was the fevered temper of the times (the Ursuline convent was only one of many entertaining real or imaginary devils) that the priests were convinced, almost to a man, that the claims of possession were valid. Even when several of the sisters recanted, under the strenuous exorcism, they continued to cast out devils, and often in public for the

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edification of the faithful; Loudun became a tourist attraction. That the evil spirits were rather strikingly cooperative with the intentions of Soeur Jeanne's lucid intervals did not disturb anyone. It was not surprising that bystanders, including several exorcists, succumbed to the general hysteria. Two or three died as a result, and died lunatics.

Soeur Jeanne herself eventually recovered, if that is the word. From ranting hostess to devils, she became the recipient of "great graces" and a sort of holy show, posting about the country to display the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph "miraculously" inscribed on her left hand. The man responsible for her recuperation, Father Jean Joseph Surin, S.J., himself became the victim of advanced melancholia; it took nearly the remainder of his life to shake off his conviction that he was damned.

Urbain Grandier, who had escaped punishment on many valid charges, died for Soeur Jeanne's false one. He was tortured and burned at the stake for causing, in league with Satan, the Ursuline possession.

All of this absorbing material is presented in the full elegance of Huxley's irony and penetration; there is more than a little suggestion of the surgeon at work in lace cuffs here, as in his early novels. It would be a mistake, however, to write off the book as an attempt to explain away, or even to minimize, the spiritual on psychological evidence. Mr. Huxley's respect for religion is both genuine and notable, as everyone who has followed his investigation of eastern faiths, with Gerald Heard, Christopher Isherwood and others, is well aware. In this instance, he calls on authorities from St. Teresa of Avila to Lallemant in differentiating falsities like the Loudun affair from authentic religious experience.

Quoting Lallemant, he says, "One of the seven Gifts of the Spirit is Intelligence, and the vice opposed to Intelligence is 'coarseness in regard to spiritual things'. This coarseness is the ordinary state of the unregenerate, who are more

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or less completely blind to the inner light and more or less completely deaf to inspiration."

Catholic readers may not wholly agree with Mr. Huxley's distinctions. Precisely because of this, they should find *The Devils of Loudun* worth serious consideration. There is undoubtedly a great deal in the centuries' accretion of superstition surrounding the faith which needs clearing. It is not too much to say that this book should be a means to that end.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, Vol. I. Rt. Rev. Benedict Baur, O.S.B. Translated by Rev. Edward Malone, O.S.B. Herder. $7.50.

By JAMES F. KITTLESON

AFTER considering Dom Benedict's first volume of meditations on the liturgical year (Advent to Pentecost), I can think of only two other books available in English which can claim to be as integrated with the proper Mass texts: *Vine and Branches,* by Msgr. Hellriegel and *Lent,* by Conrad Pepler, O.P. However, many have been looking for a complete book of daily meditations based on the liturgical year with emphasis on the seasonal liturgy. Dom Benedict's book can be warmly recommended. It would be worth the price even if it offered only his daily meditations from Septuagesima Sunday through Easter. All the elements found in this most perfect season of the Church's worship, including the significance of the Stational Churches, are woven into living and meaningful considerations by the author. This readable translation by Father Edward Malone should be welcomed by the growing number of laity who wish to integrate the liturgy into their lives.

REVIEWERS

John A. Lynch is an editor for the Ave Maria press at Notre Dame.

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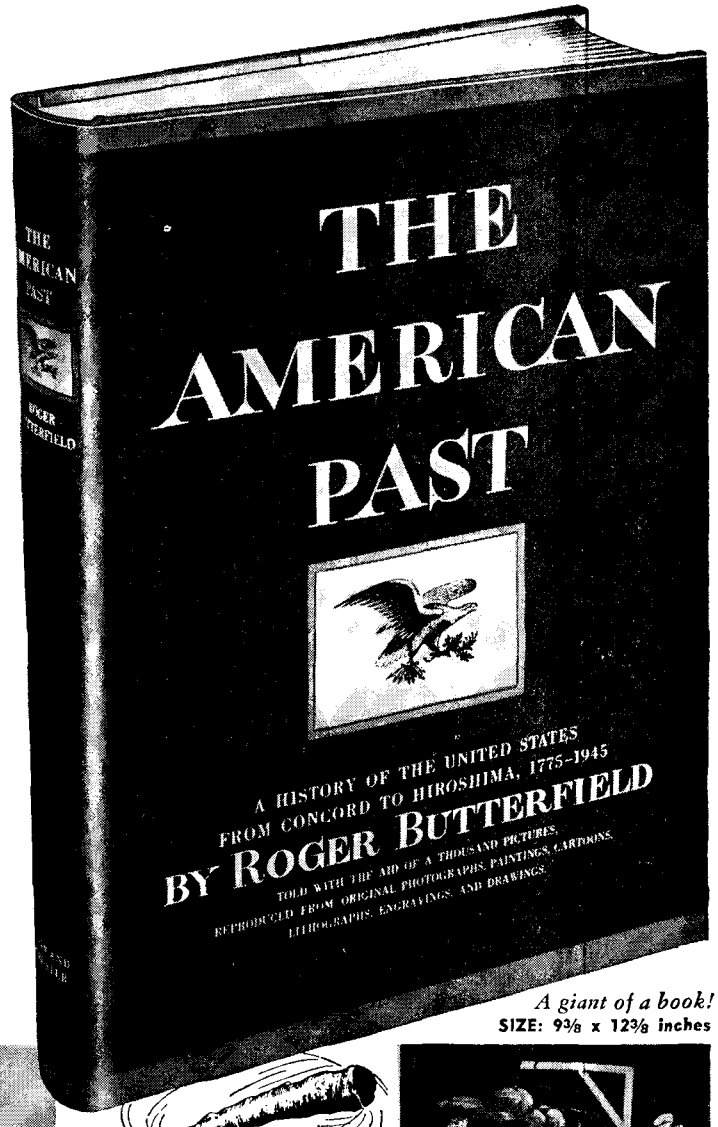
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